

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5 and 7-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Matsuo '306 ("Matsuo"). This rejection is respectfully traversed because Matsuo is not prior art to the present application. Specifically, the priority date of the present application (September 10, 2003) pre-dates the filing date of Matsuo (January 20, 2004). Submitted herewith is a certified English translation of the priority document for the present application (JP 2003-318012) so as to perfect Applicants' claim for foreign priority. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that the double-patenting rejection has been rendered moot by the enclosed terminal disclaimer, which terminal disclaimer is being filed without prejudice.

Having fully responded to all matters raised in the Office Action, Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance, an indication for which is respectfully solicited. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below. To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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